

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

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FM AMCONSUL NICE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1290

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: EAIR, FR, US

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: CONCORDE PROTESTS

1. MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM AND MAYOR OF NICE,
MR. JACQUES MEDECIN, CALLED AT THE CONSULATE MORNING OF
MARCH 10 TO EXPRESS HIS CONCERN WITH REGARD TO FORTHCOMING
NY PORT AUTHORITY'S DECISION ON THE CONCORDE. MEDECIN'S
VISIT WAS PROMPTED BY THE FACT THAT DEAN OF NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY, DEPUTY VIRGILE BAREL (COMMUNIST) HAS REQUESTED
MEETING WITH CONSUL REGARDING SAME SUBJECT MARCH 11, 1977.

2. MEDECIN BEGAN THE MEETING BY STATING THAT HE ACTUALLY
HAD NOTHING CONCRETE TO SAY REGARDING THE MATTER. HIS
VISIT, HE SAID, IN THIS PRE-ELECTION PERIOD, WAS PROMPTED
BY THE FACT THAT A COMMUNIST DELEGATION WILL CALL AT
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CONSULATE OF FRIDAY, APRIL 11, IN ORDER TO EXPRESS DISMAY
OVER US POSTIION ON THE FRENCH-BRITISH AIRCRAFT.
MEDECIN STATED THAT, UNLIKE MANY FRENCHMEN, HE FULLY
UNDERSTOOD THE SEPARATION OF POWERS IN THE US AND, THE
FACT THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WAS IN NO WAY ABLE TO
GIVE ORDERS TO THE NY PORT AUTHORITY.

3. PRINCIPAL OFFICER AND MINISTER DISCUSSED THE FOLLOWING POINTS WHICH MEDECIN LATER COMMUNICATED TO THE PRESS UPON HIS DEPARTURE FROM THE CONCLATE:

A) THE FACT THAT US OPPOSITION TO THE CONCORDE CANNOT PROPERLY BE CLASSIFIED AS PROTECTIONISM IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE US HAS NO SST PROJECT TO PROTECT.

B) THE OBJECTION OF THOSE WHO LIVE IN THE VICINITY OF JFK AIRPORT IS MAINLY DUE TO ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS, PO POINTED OUT THAT THE SAME TYPE OF CONCERN EXISTS IN FRANCE, E.I. AT THE INDUSTRIAL PARK OF SOPHIA ANTIPOLIS, LOCATED IN NICE AREA, WHERE ONLY NON-POLLUTING INDUSTRY IS SOLICITED; PUBLIC OPPOSITION TO THE PARIS/LYON HIGH-SPEED RAIL-LINK.

C) IN ORDER TO DEMONSTRATE THE POWER OF CIVIC GROUPS IN THE US, PO RECALLED TO MINISTER THE FACT THAT IN THE PAST 30 YEARS BOTH FEDERAL AND NY STATE GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR A NEW AIRPORT SITE IN THE VICINITY OF NEW YORK CITY. OPPOSITIONS FROM LOCAL GROUPS HAVE PREVENTED THEM FROM FINDING SAME.

D) IN ADDITION, MEDECIN WAS ALSO REMINDED THAT THE EMBASSY IN PARIS HAS FOUGHT LONG AND HARD TO ENLIGHTEN PUBLIC OPINION IN THE US WITH REGARD TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE LANDING OF THE CONCORDE AND TO THE FOREIGN POLICY CONSIDERATIONS IN THIS REGARD. THE US GOVERNMENT HAS DONE WHAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT HAS REQUESTED. CONCORDE LANDING RIGHTS HAVE BEEN GRANTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECRETARY COLEMAN'S DECISION ON CONCORDE.

E) PO ALSO CALLED TO MEDECIN'S ATTENTION THE NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL QUOTE THE BATTLE OF CONCRODE UNQUOTE PRINTED IN IHT MARCH 10, 1977 AS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE TRADITIONAL FAIR-PLAY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. THE EDITORIAL SUGGESTS THAT IRRESPECTIVE OF ALL THE ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS, THE BASIC PROBLEM LIES IN THE OBJECTION TO THE NOISE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS AND SUGGESTS THAT THE REAL DECISION LIES IN A TRUE TEST OF CONCORDE'S ABILITY TO CONTROL THE NOISE FACTOR. THE FRENCH PRESS ANNOUNCED THIS MORNING THAT FOR THE FIRS TIME IN THREE YEARS, A MEETING OF FRENCH, BRITISH AND AMERICAN

TECHNICIANS WAS HELD IN NEW YORK MARCH 9, 1977 FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUBMITTING TO THE PORT AUTHORITY FRENCH/ BRITISH PROJECTS FOR REDUCING THE NOISE FACTOR ON TAKE-OFF. (NICE-MATIN 3/10/77). MEDECIN WAS MOST IMPRESSED BY TIMES EDITORIAL AND PROMISED TO MAKE REFERENCE TO SAME IN HIS SUBSEQUENT TALK WITH THE PRESS.

4. NEITHER THE POSSIBILITY OF ANTI-AMERICAN DEMONSTRATION NOR BOYCOTTING OF AMERICAN PRODUCTS SHOULD THE PORT AUTHORITY'S REPLY BE NO TO THE CONCORDE WERE DISCUSSED DURING THIS MEETING.

5. AT THE END OF THE MEETING, PO CONGRATULATED MEDECIN FOR HIS COMMENTS CONCERNING CONCORDE ON RADIO MONTE CARLO ON MARCH 8TH. THE INTERVIEW WAS GIVEN NATION-WIDE PUBLICITY. WHILE BEING INTERVIEWED TOGETHER WITH DEPUTY PAUL LAURENT (P.C./PARIS), MEDECIN REMINDED HIM THAT AT THE TIME WHEN THEY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WERE CONGRESSMEN TOGETHER, THEY WERE BOTH OPPOSED TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SST. ONCE CONCORDE BECAME AN IRREVERSIBLE REALITY, MEDCIN STATED THAT HE BECAME A SUPPORTER OF THE AIRCRAFT AND REMAINS SO TODAY. HE ADDED THAT IN HIS OPINION, ONE OF THE MOST FAVORABLE LINES FOR THE EXPLOITATION OF THE CONCORDE POTENTIAL WOULD BE THE PARIS/TOKYO ROUTE. IN ORDER FOR SUCH A LINE TO BE OPERATIONAL, HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR THE SOVIET UNION TO GRANT LANDING RIGHTS IN NOVOSIBIRSK. MEDECIN POINTED OUT THAT FRANCE'S REQUEST FOR SUCH RIGHTS HAD BEEN DENIED BY THE USSR UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE TURPOLEV 144, A COPY OF THE CONCORDE, IS PUT INTO SERVICE. MEDECIN CONCLUDED THE INTERVIEW BY NOTING THAT THE DENIAL OF SUCH LANDING RIGHTS IS, IN HIS OPINION, MOST PREJUDICIAL TO THE FUTURE OF THE CONCORDE AND, ADDRESSING LAURENT DIRECTLY, STATED THAT QUOTE IF MY WORDS HAVE SOME WEIGHT IN THE UNITED STATES, MR. LAURENT, YOU WOULD CERTAINLY HAVE MORE INFLUENCE THAT I IN THE SOVIET UNION. UNQUOTE. MURPHY

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